

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

SONJA GRIFFIN-ROBINSON,

Plaintiff,

-against-

NEW YORK CITY HEALTH AND
HOSPITALS; MITCHELL KATZ,
PRESIDENT AND CEO; LISE WILSON,
SOCIAL WORKER; RONALD COBB, MD;
CHRISTOPHER PENA, MD,

Defendants.

21-CV-4881 (LTS)

ORDER

LAURA TAYLOR SWAIN, Chief United States District Judge:

Plaintiff filed this action *pro se*. On July 6, 2021, the Court dismissed the complaint for failure to state a claim on which relief may be granted. On July 28, 2021, Plaintiff filed a letter addressed to former Chief Judge Colleen McMahon challenging the July 6, 2021 dismissal order.¹

The Court liberally construes this submission as a motion under Fed. R. Civ. P. 59(e) to alter or amend a judgment and a motion under Local Civil Rule 6.3 for reconsideration, and, in the alternative, as a motion under Fed. R. Civ. P. 60(b) for relief from a judgment or order. *See Triestman v. Fed. Bureau of Prisons*, 470 F.3d 471, 474 (2d Cir. 2006); *see also Tracy v. Freshwater*, 623 F.3d 90, 101 (2d Cir. 2010) (The solicitude afforded to *pro se* litigants takes a variety of forms, including liberal construction of papers, “relaxation of the limitations on the amendment of pleadings,” leniency in the enforcement of other procedural rules, and “deliberate,

¹ It is unclear why Plaintiff addressed her letter to Judge McMahon.

continuing efforts to ensure that a *pro se* litigant understands what is required of him”) (citations omitted). After reviewing the arguments in Plaintiff’s submission, the Court denies the motion.

DISCUSSION

The standards governing Fed. R. Civ. P. 59(e) and Local Civil Rule 6.3 are the same. *R.F.M.A.S., Inc. v. Mimi So*, 640 F. Supp. 2d 506, 509 (S.D.N.Y. 2009). The movant must demonstrate that the Court overlooked “controlling law or factual matters” that had been previously put before it. *Id.* at 509 (discussion in the context of both Local Civil Rule 6.3 and Fed. R. Civ. P. 59(e)); *see Padilla v. Maersk Line, Ltd.*, 636 F. Supp. 2d 256, 258-59 (S.D.N.Y. 2009). “Such motions must be narrowly construed and strictly applied in order to discourage litigants from making repetitive arguments on issues that have been thoroughly considered by the court.” *Range Road Music, Inc. v. Music Sales Corp.*, 90 F. Supp. 2d 390, 391-92 (S.D.N.Y. 2000); *see also SimplexGrinnell LP v. Integrated Sys. & Power, Inc.*, 642 F. Supp. 2d 206 (S.D.N.Y. 2009) (“A motion for reconsideration is not an invitation to parties to ‘treat the court’s initial decision as the opening of a dialogue in which that party may then use such a motion to advance new theories or adduce new evidence in response to the court’s ruling.’”) (internal quotation and citations omitted).

In her motion, Plaintiff restates allegations made in the complaint, and again asserts that her civil rights and her rights under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) have been violated. As this Court stated in its July 6, 2021 order, and Judges Stanton and Engelmayer have held in other actions Plaintiff has filed, HIPAA does not contain a private right of action allowing an individual suit. *See Meadows v. United Services, Inc.*, 963 F.3d 240, 244 (2d Cir. 2020); *see also Griffin-Robinson v. Salov*, ECF 1:20-CV-2712, 10 (S.D.N.Y. Sept. 21, 2020) (dismissing Plaintiff’s HIPAA claims because the law does not include a private right of action); *Salov*, ECF 1:20-CV-2712, 6 (S.D.N.Y. May 6, 2020) (same). Moreover, like the

complaint, Plaintiff's motion fails to allege any facts suggesting that Plaintiff has a cognizable federal claim against Drs. Cobb and Pena.

Finally, Plaintiff argues in her motion that she should have been provided an opportunity to amend her complaint. But as stated in the order of dismissal, the Court is not required to grant a *pro se* plaintiff leave to amend where it would be futile, and the defects in Plaintiff's complaint cannot be cured with an amendment.

Plaintiff has therefore failed to demonstrate in her motion that the Court overlooked any controlling decisions or factual matters with respect to the dismissed action. Plaintiff's motion under Fed. R. Civ. P. 59(e) and Local Civil Rule 6.3 is therefore denied.

Under Fed. R. Civ. P. 60(b), a party may seek relief from a district court's order or judgment for the following reasons:

(1) mistake, inadvertence, surprise, or excusable neglect; (2) newly discovered evidence that, with reasonable diligence, could not have been discovered in time to move for a new trial under Rule 59(b); (3) fraud (whether previously called intrinsic or extrinsic), misrepresentation, or other misconduct of an opposing party; (4) the judgment is void; (5) the judgment has been satisfied, released, or discharged; it is based on an earlier judgment that has been reversed or vacated; or applying it prospectively is no longer equitable; or (6) any other reason justifying relief.

Fed. R. Civ. P. 60(b).

The Court has considered Plaintiff's arguments, and even under a liberal interpretation of her motion, Plaintiff has failed to demonstrate that any of the grounds listed in the first five clauses of Fed. R. Civ. P. 60(b) apply. Therefore, the motion under any of these clauses is denied.

To the extent that Plaintiff seeks relief under Fed. R. Civ. P. 60(b)(6), the motion is also denied. "[A] Rule 60(b)(6) motion must be based upon some reason other than those stated in clauses (1)-(5)." *United Airlines, Inc. v. Brien*, 588 F.3d 158, 175 (2d Cir. 2009) (quoting *Smith v. Sec'y of HHS*, 776 F.2d 1330, 1333 (6th Cir. 1985)). A party moving under Rule 60(b)(6) cannot

circumvent the one-year limitation applicable to claims under clauses (1)-(3) by invoking the residual clause (6) of Rule 60(b). *Id.* A Rule 60(b)(6) motion must show both that the motion was filed within a “reasonable time” and that “‘extraordinary circumstances’ [exist] to warrant relief.” *Old Republic Ins. Co. v. Pac. Fin. Servs. of America, Inc.*, 301 F.3d 54, 59 (2d Cir. 2002) (per curiam) (citation omitted). Plaintiff has failed to demonstrate that extraordinary circumstances exist to warrant relief under Fed. R. Civ. P. 60(b)(6). *See Ackermann v. United States*, 340 U.S. 193, 199-202 (1950).

CONCLUSION

Accordingly, Plaintiff’s motion for reconsideration (ECF 6) is denied.

Plaintiff’s case in this Court under docket No. 21-CV-4881 is closed. The Court will only accept for filing documents that are directed to the Second Circuit Court of Appeals. If Plaintiff files other documents that are frivolous or meritless, the Court will direct Plaintiff to show cause why Plaintiff should not be barred from filing further documents in this action.

The Clerk of Court is directed to mail a copy of this order to Plaintiff and note service on the docket.

The Court certifies under 28 U.S.C. § 1915(a)(3) that any appeal from this order would not be taken in good faith, and therefore *in forma pauperis* status is denied for the purpose of an appeal. *See Coppedge v. United States*, 369 U.S. 438, 444-45 (1962).

SO ORDERED.

Dated: August 2, 2021
New York, New York

/s/ Laura Taylor Swain

LAURA TAYLOR SWAIN
Chief United States District Judge